

State of California  
Regional Water Quality Control Board  
San Diego Region

EXECUTIVE OFFICER SUMMARY REPORT  
May 11, 2005

ITEM: 11

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION: Regional Board support for request to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) for funding of an Epidemiological Study and /or a Bacteria Source Analysis of San Juan Creek and Doheny Beach in Orange County. (Tentative Resolution No. R9-2005-0133) (*John Robertus*)

PURPOSE: The Board will receive public comments and consider adoption of Tentative Resolution R9-2005-0133 that will support the request for funding from the SWRCB of an epidemiological study and/or a bacteria source analysis study in the waters of the San Juan Creek Watershed located in south Orange County.

PUBLIC NOTICE: The Agenda notice for the May 11, 2005, Regional Board Meeting serves as the public notice for this item.

DISCUSSION: Bacteria impacts to waters at swimming beaches and at inland areas where body contact recreation occurs is a significant public health concern. In the San Diego region, there are several swimming beaches are located near the mouth of creeks or river systems and there are also many locations in the upstream creeks and rivers that are used for body contact water recreation. To assess the degree of impacts from bacteria present in these waters presents a challenge to public health officials and to the Regional Board. A site specific bacteria source analysis study can provide critical information about the sources, fate and transport of bacteria and it can specifically investigate whether bacteria in the waters of the study area are of human origins or from birds or animals. A recent study in Mission Bay revealed that most of the bacteria in the Bay is from non-human sources.

The proposed epidemiological study in the Doheny Creek Beach area will provide information about the extent to which swimmers contract illness that is associated with

body contact with bacteria or other pollutants at that beach. A recent epidemiological study conducted by the Regional Board and the SWRCB in Mission Bay determined the rate of illness for swimmers in the Bay during the study period. This study has been proven to be of great value to the water quality protection plan for Mission Bay, however it is not a study that is transferable to an ocean swimming beach at the mouth of a creek. The proposed Epidemiological Study at Doheny Beach can provide very significant information that may be transferable to other beach locations. The last significant beach epidemiological study at a California beach was conducted in 1996 at Santa Monica Beach, and it proved to be a milestone for assessment of bacteria impairment of recreational water uses.

LEGAL ISSUES:

None

SUPPORTING  
DOCUMENTS

1. (Tentative) RESOLUTION R9-2005-0133
2. Project Summary Sheet Titled: San Juan Creek Watershed/Doheny State Park Beach Water Quality Studies
3. Paper titled: The City of Dana Point – A Paradigm for Water Quality
4. City of Dana Point Newsletter of 27 January, 2002
5. U.S. News and World Report article of 8/16/04 Title: Don't go in the water
6. Map of Dana Point Harbor and the Doheny Beach area

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt the Tentative Resolution.